

Residential Study Group (RSG)
January 19, 2017
Arlington Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room
6:00-9:30PM

Attendees: Steve McKenna, Town Manager appointee; Pasi Miettinen, Town Manager appointee; Wynelle Evans, Town Manager appointee; Andrew Bunnell, Redevelopment Board; Jenny Raitt, Planning and Community Development; Laura Wiener, Planning and Community Development; Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager; Bill Copithorne, industry representative; Rick Vallerelli, Inspectional Services; Mike Byrne, Inspectional Services; Town Meeting Member; Adam Auster, Town Meeting Member.

Guests: Pete Howard, Master Plan Implementation Committee; Steve Revilak, Zoning Recodification Working Group

Jenny opened the meeting. The group reviewed the prior meeting's discussion and outcomes. The group focused on the draft zoning and town bylaw warrant articles for 2017 Annual Town Meeting regarding driveways and a Residential Construction Agreement which were circulated in advance of the meeting by Town Counsel, Doug Heim. Additionally, one new driveway sketch was provided to show a grade of 12%.

Proposal is to discourage builders from developing garages under new homes. Liz shared her research on Belmont's regulation of driveways and below-ground garages. She also shared her conversation at the past Arlington Redevelopment Board meeting and their support of addressing these grades. The group continued to discuss options for grades of driveways and their related impacts on new homes.

Steve noted that some of the other examples provided were not from comparable communities. We are more urban with smaller lot sizes than Reading and other communities on the list. A 10% grade would create too much pavement. He said that any action has a reaction. Where a car can park is important and we don't want them to be too close to abutting properties or too tightly parked in existing neighborhoods. Maybe there could be an incentive for addressing the front yard setback. Steve reviewed potential provisions for incentives.

The group then worked through minor edits to each Town Bylaw warrant article. For Article "A" the group discussed eliminating the meeting and requiring builders to provide evidence of a notice to abutters. Abutters would be 200 feet from the property. They must provide this evidence prior to receipt of a building permit. Minor edits were made to Article "B" and Article "C". For Article "D" the group agreed to eliminate very steep driveways by setting a maximum grade of 15% for safety reasons. They also required a landscaped area between the driveway and the lot line and suggested using Belmont's language for this subsection. The group discussed providing incentive to discourage below-grade garages and also reducing the number of parking spaces required for one- two- and three-family dwellings.

The group briefly discussed the fifth bylaw amendment regarding noise abatement. The group agreed to potentially amend construction hours and to discuss the issues around noise regulation after consultation with Christine Bongiorno, Director of Health and Human Services who is the liaison to the Board of Health and John Martin, Town Meeting Member and Industrial Hygienist.

The group requested that all bylaws move forward to be filed accordingly.